

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application.

Drawing Objections

Regarding the objection to the drawings, Applicants direct the Office's attention to, for example, the end of the FIG. 1 discussion, in which it is discussed that in some embodiments, encryption support may be transparently provided by way of the described intermediary layer ("this ability of the intermediary layer provides an opportunity for allowing transparent ... support for new network protocols and features, without changing existing base drivers 104-108 for current network interfaces 116-120"). The term transparent means that some embodiments may perform secondary use processing such that it appears to have been performed by another adapter.

And, in FIG. 4 and related discussion, items 314-320 concern, for example, providing secondary use for encryption technology provided by one but not another adapter in a system. As discussed with respect to FIG. 4 item 302, for example, a "single, fast, encryption component to an adapter may support encryption requirements for many other hardware devices."

Thus, it is submitted the drawings already provide adequate support for the claim language. However, if the Examiner requires a more specific drawing to this feature, Applicants will gladly provide a new illustration directed to such secondary use. Alternatively, the claim language could be amended if it would clarify inventive intent, e.g., claim 22 could be amended to recite "providing the second data to the first network interface for transparent processing thereby on behalf of the first network interface."

35. U. S. C. §102(e)

Claims 1-2 and 20-21 stand rejected under §102(e) as being anticipated by Stevens (U. S. Patent No. 6,324,583). Applicants traverse the rejections. Applicants have treated claim 12 as being rejected on the same grounds since through typographical error (now corrected) claim 12 should have mirrored claim 1 in that transmission should have occurred by the first not second network interface.

In reviewing the Examiner's Response to Arguments, in particular, paragraph 37, Applicants believe they see what needs to be done to clarify inventive intent. Claims 1, 12 and 20 have been amended to clarify that the first and second network interfaces are different from each other, and that the second network interface transparently processes the first network data into a second network data for transmitting by the first network interface.

Thus as discussed in Applicants' previous response, Stevens' teaching of communicating between dissimilar stacks is not applicable to present claimed embodiments. As stated in the Stevens Abstract:

The invention improves the prior art in the processing efficiency of connecting two dissimilar stacks in the **same processing node**. This is accomplished by establishing a virtual input/output device to connect the bottom layer of the one stack to the bottom layer of the other stack. **No physical resources** ... are required and efficiency is improved by requiring processing only in the lower layer of the stack that is connected to **an** external link."

As is readily apparent, Stevens contemplates a single NIC with software interconnects, see, e.g., Stevens virtual device 204. As amended, recited embodiments require multiple distinct network interfaces, where the second network interface may

transparently operate on behalf of the first network interface to provide functionality, e.g., encryption support, lacking in the first network interface.

Such offloading between network interface hardware is **not** taught by Stevens. There is no suggestion in the portions of Stevens relied on by the Office of using the hardware of another network interface as recited. In particular, since the relied on portions of Stevens (and elsewhere as best it can be determined) only teaches the single network interface, Stevens cannot operate as claimed, e.g., the single network interface of Stevens either will or will not support the processing ability (e.g., encryption) or other ability. Hence it is submitted Stevens cannot anticipate claims 1, 12, or 20.

It is further submitted dependent claims 2-11, 13-19, and 21 are therefore allowable for at least the reason as depending from allowable base claims. The Office is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 1-2 and 20-21.

In Office Action ¶10, **claims 22-26** stand rejected under §102(e) stand rejected as being anticipated by Rydbeck (U. S. Patent No. 6,108,562).

Applicants traverse the rejections and also submit the rejections are moot based on the amendments to clarify inventive intent and related discussion. In particular, Applicants note that the claim 22 preamble has been amended to clarify the recited context, e.g., the claim 22 network interfaces are each able to communicate over a network, but if one network interface lacks a certain functionality, such as encryption, as discussed above and as amended another network interface may transparently perform the functionality on behalf of the lacking network interface.

This recited lending of processing abilities is not taught or suggested by the portions of Rydbeck relied on by the Office. While at col. 5 line 55 – col. 6 line 31, Rydbeck does teach a converter 420 for communicating on a network not supported by a phone, the recited interplay between first and second network interfaces is not taught or suggested by Rydbeck, e.g., there is no teaching or suggestion of the recited offloading of processing functionality to a second network interface as recited. In particular, there is no teaching or suggestion of the recited “providing the second data to the first network interface so that the second data appears to have been processed by the first network interface.”

Claim 24 has been amended to clarify that the second data derived by the second NIC is provided to the first NIC for transmission by the first NIC to the recipient. This offloading of processing to and from the second NIC as recited is not taught or suggested by the documents relied on by the Office.

Applicants therefore submit the documents relied on by the Office fail to anticipate or even suggest the recited sharing of processing capabilities among members of a system of physical network interfaces as recited in claims 22-26.

To focus discussion on the independent claims, only the rejections of the independent claims are addressed herein. The merits of the 35 USC §103 rejections of independent claims 3-19 have not been addressed in detail at this time, however it is submitted that no combination of the documents relied on by the Office teaches or suggests the recited interaction between network interfaces. Please note a typographical error in claim 12 has been corrected, thus addressing the rejection.

Application No. 09/476,613
Amendment dated October 18, 2004
Response to Office Action of June 16, 2004

Atty. Docket No. 042390. P7493
Examiner Douglas
TC/A. U. 2142

INTERVIEW REQUEST

If the present response to the independent claims is not deemed persuasive, the Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned to perform an interview to discuss the merits of the claim rejections and the Office's and Applicants' respective positions on the allowability of the claimed embodiments.


Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the rejections of the independent claims have been overcome, and therefore all claims 1-26 are presently in condition for allowance. Such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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Steven D. Yates
Patent Attorney
Intel Corporation
Registration No. 42,242
(503) 264-6589

c/o Blakely, Sokoloff, Taylor & Zafman, LLP
12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90025-1026

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